

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 VIENTI 00672 020628Z

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

-----021657Z 026493 /41

R 010931Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8008

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

SECRET VIENTIANE 0672

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MPOL PINR LA UR VN

SUBJECT: FRENCH SUSPECT USSR MISSILE INSTALLATION IN LAOS

1. FRENCH EMBASSY COUNSELOR LAMBERT, FRIDAY, APRIL 1, TOLD ME FRENCH HAD RECEIVED REPORTS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES THAT VIETNAMESE MILITARY AND SOVIET TECHNICIANS WERE CARRYING ON A SECRET CONSTRUCTION PROJECT IN AN AREA BETWEEN MUONG KASSY AND BAN XON TO THE EAST. HE SAID THE AREA IN QUESTION WAS BASIN SURROUNDED BY THREE HILLS. ACCORDING TO HIS REPORTS, VIETNAMESE ARMY PERSONNEL AND TEN SOVIET TECHNICIANS WHO LIVED ON THE SITE WERE CONDUCTING EXCAVATIONS AND INSTALLING CEMENT PLATFORMS. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE HELICOPTER AND FIXED WING AIRCRAFT TRAFFIC BETWEEN VIET-NAM AND THIS REGION. RADAR FACILITIES WERE INSTALLED AS WELL AS ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS ON THE THREE HILLS. ELECTRIC GENERATORS AT THE SITE OPERATED DAY AND NIGHT. ALL LAO ARE FORBIDDEN ACCESS TO THE PLACE BUT SOME LAO HELICOPTER PILOTS WHO HAVE SEEN IT HAVE SPOKEN ABOUT IT. LAMBERT SAID THE FRENCH HAD AT LEAST TWELVE SEPARATE SOURCES WHICH HAD REPORTED ON THIS SITE. HE SAID THERE WAS NO DOUBT

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 VIENTI 00672 020628Z

IN HIS MIND THAT THE VIETNAMESE AND SOVIETS WERE CONSTRUCTING SOMETHING BUT HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT.

2. FOR THE LAST MONTH AND A HALF, LAMBERT SAID, THE FRENCH HAD BEEN RECEIVING SIMILAR REPORTS ABOUT SOVIET AND VIETNAMESE ARMY ACTIVITY IN AN AREA THIRTY KILOMETERS NORTH OF THAKHEK IN THE LIMESTONE HILL AREA.

HE SAID THIS AREA WAS ALSO FORBIDDEN TO LAO.

3. LAMBERT SAID THERE WERE RUMORS, WHICH HE COULD NOT EVALUATE, THAT THE VIETNAMESE WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF SOVIET TECHNICIANS WERE ASSEMBLING MISSILES IN THESE AREAS. IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHAT KIND OF MISSILES WERE SUPPOSED TO BE UNDER ASSEMBLY OR WHAT THE PURPOSE OF ANY SUCH INSTALLATION WOULD BE.

4. COMMENT: WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING OF THIS SORT FROM ANYBODY ELSE AND WE ARE IN NO POSITION TO EVALUATE LAMBERT'S REPORTS.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT DEPARTMENT PASS THIS MESSAGE TO CINCPAC, DIA AND CIA.

CORCORAN

SECRET

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Message Attributes

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